

RECEIVED
CENTRAL FAX CENTER

AUG 30 2006

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

In the claims:

Claim 1. (Currently Amended) A seal element comprising:
a base pipe;
a screen disposed at said base pipe positioned such that a fluidic component of a solid laden fluid introducible to said seal element is drainable radially to said base pipe; and
an-a fluid permeable expandable material disposed radially outwardly of said base pipe and said screen.

Claim 2. (Previously presented) The seal element as claimed in Claim 1 wherein said expandable material is progressively expandable.

Claim 3. (Cancelled)

Claim 4. (Cancelled)

Claim 5. (Previously presented) The seal element as claimed in Claim 1 wherein said screen is configured to allow passage of a fluid constituent of a slurry while impeding passage of a solid constituent of said slurry.

Claim 6. (Previously presented) The seal element as claimed in Claim 1 wherein said screen and said expandable element define an area into which a slurry is accepted and a particulate constituent of said slurry is retained.

Claim 7. (Previously presented) The seal element as claimed in Claim 1 wherein said element is maintained in an expanded condition by grain-to-grain contact of a solid constituent of said slurry.

Claim 8. (Previously presented) The seal element as claimed in Claim 5 wherein said fluid is drained off to said base pipe.

Claim 9. (Previously presented) The seal element as claimed in Claim 5 wherein said fluid is drained off to a wellbore annulus.

Claim 10. (Previously presented) The seal element as claimed in Claim 1 wherein said element further includes a check valve configured to prevent backflow of a slurry.

Claim 11. (Previously presented) The seal element as claimed in Claim 1 wherein said screen is spaced from said base pipe to facilitate fluid drain off.

Claim 12. (Previously presented) The seal element as claimed in Claim 1 wherein said element includes a slurry entrance passage.

Claim 13. (Previously presented) The seal element as claimed in Claim 1 wherein said element includes a fluid exit passage.

Claim 14. (Previously presented) The seal element as claimed in Claim 12 wherein said entrance passage includes a check valve.

Claim 15. (Currently Amended) (Currently Amended) A seal element comprising:
a base pipe;
a screen disposed at said base pipe positioned such that a fluidic component of a solid
laden fluid introducible to said seal element is drainable radially to said base pipe;
an expandable material disposed radially outwardly of said base pipe and said screen;
and
an exit passage from said element having~~The seal element as claimed in Claim 12~~

~~wherein said exit passage includes a check valve.~~

Claim 16. (Currently Amended) A seal system comprising:

a particle laden fluid having particulate matter coated with a material that bonds individual particles together over at least one of time, temperature, pressure, exposure to a chemical and combinations including at least one of the foregoing;

a pump capable of pumping said particle laden fluid;

an expandable element including:

a base pipe;

a screen disposed at said base pipe positioned such that a fluidic component of a solid laden fluid introducible to said seal element is drainable radially to said base pipe; and

an expandable material disposed radially outwardly of said base pipe and said screen.

Claim 17. (Cancelled)

Claim 18. (Currently Amended) A seal system as claimed in Claim 17 ~~16~~ wherein said chemical is positioned at said expandable element.

Claim 19. (Previously presented) The seal system as claimed in Claim 16 wherein said expandable material is progressively expandable.

Claim 20. (Previously presented) The seal system as claimed in Claim 16 wherein said system further includes a dehydrating pathway.

Claim 21. (Currently Amended) A method of creating a wellbore seal comprising:

pumping a solid laden fluid to an expandable element said solid laden fluid including a particular material coated with a substance that bonds individual particles over at least one of time, temperature, pressure, exposure to a chemical and combinations including at least

one of the foregoing;

pressurizing said element to expand the same; and
dehydrating said solid laden fluid in said expandable element leaving substantially only a solid constituent of said solid laden fluid.

Claim 22. (Previously presented) The method creating a wellbore seal as claimed in Claim 21 further comprising causing grain-to-grain loading of said solid constituent.

Claim 23. (Previously presented) The method of creating a wellbore seal as claimed in Claim 21 wherein said dehydrating comprises draining a fluid constituent of said solid laden fluid to a base pipe.

Claim 24. (Previously presented) The method of creating a wellbore seal as claimed in Claim 21 wherein said dehydrating comprises draining a fluid constituent of said solid laden fluid to an annulus.

Claim 25. (Previously presented) The method of creating a wellbore seal as claimed in Claim 21 wherein said dehydrating comprises draining a fluid constituent of said solid laden fluid through said element.

Claim 26. (Previously presented) The method of creating a wellbore seal as claimed in Claim 21 wherein said method includes elastically expanding the wellbore.

Claim 27. (Previously presented) The method of creating a wellbore seal as claimed in Claim 21 wherein said method includes plastically expanding the wellbore.

Claim 28. (Cancelled)

Claim 29. (Previously presented) The method of creating a wellbore seal as claimed in Claim 21 wherein said solid laden fluid includes particulate material and a fluid and said

particulate is more dense than said fluid.

Claim 30. (Currently Amended) A method of creating a wellbore seal comprising:
pumping a solid laden fluid, having particulate material and a fluid said particulate
being less dense than said fluid, to an expandable element;
pressurizing said element to expand the same; and
dehydrating said solid laden fluid in said expandable element leaving substantially
only a solid constituent of said solid laden fluid.
~~The method of creating a wellbore seal as claimed in Claim 21 wherein said solid laden fluid~~
~~includes particulate material and a fluid and said particulate is less dense than said fluid.~~

Claim 31. (Previously presented) An expandable element comprising:
a base pipe;
a material disposed at said base pipe capable of being expandable to a larger diametrical
dimension and being permeable to a fluid constituent of a solid laden fluid employed to
expand said material while being impermeable to a solid constituent of said solid laden fluid.